

## Resolution Resuscitation

By

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*"Be wise to resolve and patient to perform"*

*-Homer*

The celebration of the New Year is the oldest of all holidays. It was first observed in ancient Babylon about 4000 years ago. In the years around 2000 BC, Babylonians celebrated the beginning of a new year on what is now March 23. Their number one resolution was to return what had been borrowed. What a great time for us to resuscitate the resolutions and shattered promises that we made to others and ourselves just two months ago.

The ten most common resolutions today are: (1) Lose weight, (2) Stop smoking, (3) Stick to a budget, (4) Save or earn more money, (5) Find a better job, (6) Become more organized, (7) Exercise more, (8) Be more patient at work/with others, (9) Eat better and (10) Become a better person. A study done by the University of Washington's Addictive Behaviors Research Center sought to understand the factors that made people most successful in keeping their resolutions. They found that successful keepers have a strong initial commitment to make a change, have coping strategies to deal with problems that will come up, and keep track of their progress, knowing that the more monitoring you do and feedback you get, the better you will do.

They also found sure-fire ingredients for setting yourself up for resolution failure: making resolutions at the last minute, making your resolutions based on what's bothering you or is on your mind at that time, and framing your resolutions as absolutes by saying, "I will never do X again."

Since our resolutions are often things we feel we *need* to do rather than *want* to do, we are immediately at a disadvantage to follow through with them. If motivation is lacking, any excuse will do. In re-assessing your resolutions, first take the time to honestly reflect about who you are and where you want to go. Make sure that these are coming from within you and not attempts to please others. Part of this process is to identify and support your natural talents and passions to create a life you enjoy. Use that power of emotion to your advantage. See your life from the end result and let the feelings of happiness and satisfaction of achieving what you set out to do become your inspiration now. It's replacing a bad habit with a positive emotion that allows new positive habits to be formed.

Allow other people to help you and hold you accountable. Exercising/dieting/saving money/being a nonsmoker is always easier when you have made a commitment to someone else to be there for them (as well as for yourself). Want for others what you want for yourself and encourage them in times of obstacles or difficulties. Transfer these positive conversations with those you truly care about to become your inner self-talk.

If you've made too many resolutions, narrow your list down to one or two that are most important to you. You can add others mid-year if you choose to. Set **S.M.A.R.T.** goals by making sure that they are: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**ime-based. Break behaviors down into mini-goals that you can consistently do each day (no matter how small the task) and reward yourself by acknowledging that you have kept your word and integrity by doing what you said you would do. The keys to making a successful resolution are a person's confidence that he or she can make the behavior change and the commitment to making that change. Resolutions are a process, not a one-time effort and there is no better time to start than right now. Happy New Year! Happy New You!!

**Dr. Darlene Treese** has been in private practice in hypnosis and counseling since 1983. She is a Diplomate in Counseling with the National Institute of Sports, Past President of the American Psychotherapy and Medical Hypnosis Association and Vice President of the Rotary eClub of Southwest, USA. Darlene has been internationally acknowledged for her positive action and solution-based therapies and work with corporations. "A person for the people," Dr. Dar is always available to help with your questions and dilemmas through office visits, email or telephone consultations. Call her at **850-201-0073** or visit **[www.AskDrTreese.com](http://www.AskDrTreese.com)**